

**CHARLIE BAKER**  
*Governor*



**KARYN POLITO**  
*Lt. Governor*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**October 23, 2019**

CONTACT  
Sarah Finlaw  
[sarah.finlaw@MassMail.State.MA.US](mailto:sarah.finlaw@MassMail.State.MA.US)



## **Baker-Polito Administration Announces \$1.8 Million from American Student Assistance for High Schools to Launch Innovation Pathways Programs**

*Twenty-one high schools also received \$354,000 in grants to develop new college and career pathway programs*

**LAWRENCE** – Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito were joined by officials from American Student Assistance (ASA) today at Lawrence High School to announce the availability of \$1.8 million in grants to help high schools across the Commonwealth develop programs that prepare students for college and careers. The Baker-Polito Administration also awarded grants to 21 Massachusetts high schools approved to develop Innovation Pathways programs aimed at giving students knowledge and internship experiences in growing industries in the Commonwealth. The grants totaled more than \$354,000.

American Student Assistance, a national nonprofit based in Massachusetts that helps students find their path and plan for their future, chose to award the grant to the Governor's Workforce Skills Cabinet to help fund college and career preparation programs, known as Innovation Pathways. This is the first time the organization has awarded a major grant to support college and career pathways in high schools.

"Innovation Pathways are designed to engage students who are trying to discover what the next steps in their future careers are and help them succeed through college-level courses and internships," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "We are proud to continue investing in these important programs and appreciate American Student Assistance's support with this generous award, and are pleased that high schools across the Commonwealth will be able to give students better insight into the choices available to them."

"Innovation Pathways builds strong partnerships created with local employers to give students exposure and experience in their chosen field of study," **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.** "These new

pathways give students a head start to succeed in Massachusetts' high-tech economy, prepare them for their futures and create more opportunities for success."

The announcement was made at Lawrence High School, which received \$30,000 to create three new Innovation Pathways programs in the fields of health care and social assistance, information technology, and business and finance. Lawrence Mayor Daniel Rivera and Lawrence Superintendent Cynthia Paris joined the Governor and Lt. Governor, along with Secretary of Education James Peyser, for the event - one of nearly a thousand events held across the Commonwealth to celebrate the second annual statewide STEM Week, running from October 21 to October 25. The Baker-Polito Administration launched STEM Week in 2018, in partnership with the Massachusetts STEM Advisory Council, aiming to inspire more students to consider careers involving science, technology, engineering and math.

Many of the Innovation Pathways programs at high schools are in STEM-related fields. Launched in 2017, Innovation Pathways give students experience in a specific high-demand industry through coursework and internships at local employers. Students earn college credits, at no cost to them, and gain insight as to whether the field is something they want to pursue in college or as a career. Industry sectors include manufacturing, information technology, environmental and life sciences, health care and social assistance and business and finance.

"When students have a sense of purpose they become more interested and engaged in their studies, able to easily see how it all fits into their future," **said Secretary of Education James Peyser.** "As more students gain skills and knowledge in different fields of study, they will have a better sense of what courses to pursue in college or additional career training, increasing the likelihood of their success."

"We believe Massachusetts is way ahead of the curve in providing career exploration and skill building opportunities to all students – not just those in career and technical education programs. There is a true commitment from the Baker-Polito Administration to ensure all students across the Commonwealth have the skills they need to succeed in college and career. Innovation Pathways are an excellent way to provide these opportunities, and that is why ASA is so committed to their expansion," **said American Student Assistance CEO Jean Eddy.**

Across the Commonwealth, 26 high schools have designated Innovation Pathways, totaling 61 different programs. The 21 schools awarded grants today will be eligible for official designation from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Higher Education in spring 2020.

"Massachusetts is home to one of the world's leading innovation economies, and programs like Innovation Pathways make that critical connection between employers and promising talent, setting the stage for rewarding careers that help propel our economy and Commonwealth forward," **said Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Mike Kennealy.**

"The Workforce Skills Cabinet is grateful to ASA for our work together over the last year. We are aligned on vision and mission to transform education in ways that leverage real world work experience as part of the learning process," **said Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Rosalin Acosta.** "Our work with ASA to invest in schools and build Innovation Pathways for students is one of the most important strategies to build our future workforce in the Commonwealth."

Schools that apply for designation for an Innovation Pathways are required to follow five design principles:

- Equitable access for all students
- Guided academic pathway, which, in the case of Innovation Pathways, must relate to one of five specified broad industry sectors
- Enhanced student supports
- Relevant connections to career
- Deep partnerships between high schools and employers or workforce development boards

**The following schools received Innovation Pathway planning grants:**

District	High School	Pathways Sought	FY20 Planning Grant Amount
Attleboro Public Schools	Attleboro Comprehensive High School	Advanced Manufacturing	\$ 22,692
Barnstable Public Schools	Barnstable High School	Business and Finance	\$ 25,000
Boston Public Schools	Dearborn STEM Academy	Advanced Manufacturing; Environmental and Life Science; Healthcare and Social Assistance	\$ 30,000
Everett Public Schools	Everett High School	Business and Finance; Information	\$ 28,100
Fitchburg Public Schools	Fitchburg High School	Advanced Manufacturing	\$ 14,300
Gardner Public Schools	Gardner High School and	Advanced Manufacturing; Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance; Information	\$ 30,000
	Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology	Advanced Manufacturing; Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance; Information	
Hadley Public Schools	Hopkins Academy	Business and Finance; Environmental and Life Sciences	\$ 15,000
Lawrence Public Schools	Lawrence High School	Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance; Information	\$ 30,000

New Bedford Public Schools	New Bedford High School	Advanced Manufacturing; Environmental and Life Sciences; Information	\$ 30,000
North Attleboro Schools	North Attleboro High School	Advanced Manufacturing	\$ 29,700
Springfield Public Schools	Springfield Conservatory of the Arts	Information	\$ 21,000
Taunton Public Schools	Taunton High School	Health Care and Social Assistance; Information	\$ 10,000
Ware Public Schools	Ware High School	Advanced Manufacturing; Health Care and Social Assistance	\$ 10,000
Woburn Public Schools	Woburn Memorial High School	Advanced Manufacturing	\$ 29,900
Worcester Public Schools	Doherty High School	Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance	\$ 28,683
	Burncoat High School	Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance	
	Claremont Academy	Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance	
	North High School	Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance	
	South High Community School	Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance	
	University Park Campus School	Business and Finance; Health Care and Social Assistance	
		Total	\$ 354,375

**About American Student Assistance® (ASA):**

[American Student Assistance \(ASA\)](#) is a national nonprofit committed to helping kids know themselves, know their options, and make informed choices to achieve their education and career goals. ASA has a 60-year legacy of working directly with students to increase their access to higher education. ASA has turned its experience into impactful solutions for students in grades 6-12 to help them pursue their dreams.

**About the Governor's Workforce Skills Cabinet:**

Governor Baker's Workforce Skills Cabinet was created in 2015 by [Executive](#) Order, bringing together the Secretariats of Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Housing and Economic Development to align education, economic development and workforce policies in order to strategize around meeting employers' demand for skilled workers in every region of the state.

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